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**CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4567, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005**

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

October 9, 2004

Mr. Speaker, I would simply make two points. I recognize that this bill is some \$800 million above the amount that was requested originally by the President, and for that, I congratulate the subcommittee; but if anyone in this House thinks that this is an adequate response to the threat that faces us, they are smoking something that is not legal.

The fact is that we have immense homeland security needs that are not being met. And the fact is also that despite his public protestations to the contrary, the President for 3 years in a row has strenuously resisted adequate funding for homeland security. Starting with the first meeting that I had with him in the White House after 9/11 when, before the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Young) or I could even get a word out of our mouths explaining to him what some of the additions were that we thought needed to be provided, before we could even get a word out of our mouths, the President said, I just want you to know that if you appropriate one dollar more than I have asked for I will veto the bill.

So much for an open mind.

I really believe that with respect to adequate funding levels for homeland security that the President's conduct itself is a security risk, because we have immense needs that are not being met. This Congress on a bipartisan basis has consistently tried to meet those needs, and we have been consistently reined in by a White House which, as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Edwards) indicated, by a White House that thinks it is much more important to provide four times as much money to people who make a million bucks by way of tax cuts than to provide larger increases for homeland security funding.

Now, reasonable people can disagree, but those are my views, and I hope that we are not proven to be right by future events.

I just want to make one other point. I referred earlier to an important matter which was not included in this bill despite the fact that the Senate conferees voted by majority vote to include it and despite the fact that we had a majority of House conferees who favored that same provision.

I do not mind losing. I lose every day. There is nothing wrong with losing, and I can certainly accept that provided that the process that is used to determine the outcome is fair. But when it is not fair, as it was not in this case, when the process is not fair, then it leaves one to want to oppose the basic bill that is before us.

I am not going to do that because these matters are too important; but I do want to suggest that sometime, somewhere, it would be nice if committee judgments were allowed to stand rather than having the House leadership insist that they be overturned because they were not consistent with the dictates of that House leadership.

I thank the gentleman for yielding me time, and I reluctantly urge support for this bill. Again, I recognize the committee has tried to meet its responsibilities, but we are being hemmed in by a President who prefers to put money in the pockets of millionaires before putting adequate resources into the budgets that would provide greater port security, airport security and all the rest.